

u How should Clark County use federal funds (approx. \$4.2 million) to meet the housing and services needs of the special population groups?

GROUP A

Affordable Housing
(incomes <50% of median):

[illegible]

Clark County/Vancouver Consolidated Housing & Community Development Plan Update

Summary of Public Meeting #2

October 4, 1999

The purpose of the public meeting on October 4, 1999, was to gather input from local service providers, agency representatives, and members of the community about the draft update of the Consolidated Housing and Community Development (H&CD) Plan. The Plan is currently in the process of being updated to set forth a five-year strategy for using HUD assistance to meet local housing and community development needs. Input from the community during this meeting will help guide the Plan.

Plan Update Overview and Public Meeting #1 Summary

The meeting was attended by approximately 25 people, and included a fairly even distribution of agency representatives and other members of the community. The first part of the meeting was dedicated to providing an overview of the Plan update process and a summary of the results from the first public meeting on August 26, 1999. Project consultant Topaz Faulkner presented the list of needs that were identified in the previous H&CD Plan, and contrasted them with those learned during recent interviews with agency representatives. She also reviewed the barriers and solutions to acquiring affordable housing that were identified during the August 26th meeting. Attendees were requested to review the Objectives and Activities listed in the H&CD Plan and suggest changes or additions based on the information collected. This input will be incorporated in the five-year strategy.

Prioritization of Needs

During the second part of the meeting, the group focused on prioritizing the action items for the next funding cycle. The attendees were divided into three working groups of about seven people to a table, and were asked to participate in a budgeting exercise to determine how Clark County should use Federal funds to meet the housing and services needs of the special population groups. Each small group worked with an oversized matrix that listed the types of needs within the community (as summarized from Chapter 3 of the H&CD Plan), and the twelve different "needs groups" (veterans, elderly, minority groups, etc.). The three groups were also given a fixed budget of \$4.2 million to distribute among the list of needs.

The \$4.2 million budget was determined based on funding from Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) for the next funding cycle. Each group collectively decided on how much money to allocate for each housing and service need and whether the funding should be specifically for one special needs group, or for any group. The results of

the exercise suggested what the priority needs are within the community, and will help determine how future funding is allocated.

All three groups felt that homeownership opportunities for all people whose income is less than 50% of the median is a high priority. That particular need was allocated the greatest amount of money collectively. The three groups also agreed that housing units that are near transportation, schools, and shopping is another high priority in the community. Other high priority needs identified by at least one of the small groups include:

Housing Needs

- Rental of single family housing for persons with disabilities, the elderly and frail elderly, and single-parent households
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- Assistance with security deposits
- Health, vision, and dental services
- Outreach and case management for persons not in shelters, specifically for persons with mental illness and for persons affected by alcohol or substance abuse
- Residential treatment for mentally ill and/or addicted youth, and other ages
- At home supportive services for low income seniors who are developmentally disabled, have a physical disability, are elderly or frail elderly, or have a mental illness
- Accessible housing for persons with developmental disabilities or physical disabilities, or are elderly or frail elderly
- Bilingual staff and interpretive services for persons at risk of being homeless
- Adult foster care training
- Landlord training
- Crisis community center

A summary version of each group's budget allocation matrix is attached.

Clark County Housing Meeting
August 26, 1999
Location: YWCA

Galina's comments:

I would like to add to comments below that Russian-speaking people face many obstacles when they move to USA. However, they appreciate the opportunity and the privilege of living here.

In their letters that you will read below, they express the need and desire of owning their own house, which they can afford. Some say that waiting period for housing is very long. You will see from the comments that these people are desperate of better and more affordable housing.

**please note: at the meeting the group requested a summary translated in Russian to be mailed to them. Is this something you can do?*

Feedback from Russian-speaking group
(Not word-to-word translation)

The biggest obstacle for my family is the time it takes to get the affordable housing.
We are renting a house right now and would like to use our payment to purchase our own place.
Kilimik Yelena & Sergey

We live in difficult conditions 8 people in 2-bedroom house. Also, our income is very small.
Ionashku Viorina ph: 360/ 992-1065

We would like to get housing as soon as possible. It's going to be 4 years in March since we signed up. Our son is a handicap. My son and me get SSI. My wife is on welfare. Our other son is a High school student. He'll be in 12th grade. We also have a daughter. She is a medical student. In the mean time we live in apartment that and pay \$610 + utilities.

Vladimir Gordiyenko
Tel. 735-0140

We moved to Vancouver three years ago. We live in apartment that we barely afford. The rent for our two bedrooms is \$447. Our income is \$735 a month. Taxes for our car are \$670. Our phone bill for example is \$60. After paying bills, there is no money left for other things.

I became handicap after serving in World War II. My wife is very sick. She had three surgeries in Portland's Medical Institute. Medical doesn't cover all of her medicine, so that's another expense. I know that war soldiers have different benefits here, but I don't. I believe that the in German Constitution All-American and Russian soldiers won the War together.

Savinsky Petr

I would like to have my own house. We can build our house if we get some funding. It will be cheaper. Or maybe we can get some money for purchasing a lot and use professional builders with our resources.

Nina Shishkina

*Galina Boyechko

ph: 360/735-8873 x8113

e-mail: Galina.Boyechko@ci.vancouver.wa.us

3. *How many bedrooms does your home have?*
134 - 1 bedroom **9** - 4+ bedrooms
194 - 2 bedrooms **2** - 5 Bedrooms
119 - 3 bedrooms
4. *Please indicate how many people in your household, including yourself, are in the following age categories:*
234 - 0 to 6 years **177** - 36 to 45 years
171 - 7 to 12 years **138** - 46 to 55 years
130 - 12 to 18 years **124** - 56 to 65 years
105 - 19 to 25 years **91** - 66 to 75 years
190 - 26 to 35 years **45** - 76+ years
- Total number of people in your household (including yourself):*
158 - 1 person **31** - 5 people **4** - 9 people
104 - 2 people **18** - 6 people **5** - 10+ people
85 - 3 people **17** - 7 people **3** - no response
61 - 4 people **9** - 8 people
5. *Would you prefer to own or rent your home?*
229 - rent **21** - either
216 - own **29** - no response
6. *What type of housing would you prefer?*
140 - apartment **9** - group home
145 - duplex **7** - assisted living facility
269 - single family home **6** - other (refer to matrix)
46 - mobile home
7. *How many bedrooms would you prefer?*
126 - 1 bedroom **69** - 4 bedrooms
212 - 2 bedrooms **5** - 5+ bedrooms
136 - 3 bedrooms
8. *Do you need any of the following housing related services or facilities?*
31 - wheelchair accessibility **44** - minor medical assistance
22 - sight or hearing impaired accessibility **56** - chore services (laundry, etc.)
23 - food service
9. *How much do you pay each month for your housing, including utilities?*
80 - \$0 to \$225 per month **57** - \$725 to \$1,025 per month
195 - \$225 to \$525 per month **6** - \$1,025 to \$1,225 per month
147 - \$525 to \$725 per month **5** - more than \$1,225 per month

10. *What is your total annual income?*

341 - less than \$11,000	0 - \$35,001 to \$39,000
72 - \$11,001 to \$15,000	1 - \$39,001 to \$43,000
34 - \$15,001 to \$19,000	1 - \$43,001 to \$47,000
16 - \$19,001 to \$23,000	1 - \$47,001 to \$51,000
15 - \$23,001 to \$27,000	0 - \$51,001 to \$55,000
3 - \$27,001 to \$31,000	4 - over \$55,000
2 - \$31,001 to \$35,000	

<i># Persons in Family</i>	<i>30% of Median</i>	<i>Very Low Income (50% of Median)</i>	<i>60% of Median</i>	<i>Low Income (80% of Median)</i>
1	117	35	2	1
2	85	12	3	1
3	73	8	1	1
4	52	6	1	0
5	26	3	0	0
6	16	1	0	0
7	15	7	0	0
8	8	1	0	0

Not included in chart: 7 households earned greater than 80% of the PMSA median income; 9 respondents had more than eight people per household; 3 respondents did not specify amount of people in household.

Needs Analysis

Current Conditions

Of the 495 surveys completed, only 23 people indicated that they own their home, while 88% of the respondents rent. The majority live in one and two bedroom apartments (47%) and another 30% live in duplexes and single family homes. Sixteen people indicated that they have different housing arrangements than those listed on the survey, four of which are currently homeless and seven people live with parents or are staying with other family members. One respondent lives in the Oxford House, a clean and sober housing facility, and another is currently in transitional housing.

The number of people living in each household represented a fairly equal distribution of ages. One hundred and fifty-six households, or 31% of those surveyed, had children 6 years old or younger, and approximately 43% percent had children under 18 years of age (see matrix). About one third live alone.

Preferred Conditions

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Clark County/Vancouver Consolidated Housing & Community Development Plan Update

Summary of Public Meeting #1

August 26, 1999

The Clark County Department of Community Services, the city of Vancouver, and the Vancouver Housing Authority held a public meeting on August 26, 1999, to gather input from the community about the issues surrounding affordable housing in Clark County. The comments generated during this meeting will be used to help update key elements of the Consolidated Housing & Community Development Plan.

During the first half of the meeting, participants were divided into small groups and were asked to discuss the current state of affordable housing in the county. Participants identified barriers that affect and limit access to affordable housing, as well as any solutions to those barriers. The second half of the meeting was dedicated to discussing the key issues, or themes, that prevailed in each of the small group discussions. The key issues identified include:

- Lack of Affordable Housing,
- Jobs Versus Income,
- Special Needs Housing and Transitional Programs,
- Tenant and Landlord Relationship,
- Information and Assistance,
- Transportation, and
- Location / Safety Issues.

Approximately sixty people attended the meeting, including a group of nearly twenty Russian-speaking participants (see additional comments from Russian group, attached). The following is a summary of the comments that were compiled from the meeting.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

Landlords

- Won't accept vouchers
- Fees that are not refunded if application not accepted
- Entry deposits and fees too high
- High rents
- Income requirements too high (2 or 3 times monthly rent)
- Late fees that escalate
- Discrimination because of kids
- Poor quality housing

- Fair housing

Tenants

- Low income
- Insufficient number of affordable housing units, especially for 0-30% income level
- Lack of housing for large families
- Lack of accessible housing
- VHA Waiting list is too long
- High cost of housing
- Poor credit/ rent history
- Cultural barriers/Immigration stereotypes
- Language skills
- Need help finding a roommate/shared housing situation
- Lack of transitional housing
- Lack of housing for mentally ill and other special needs groups

Location

- Affordable units too far from bus lines
- Affordable units are too far away from jobs
- Unsafe Neighborhoods/Housing project appears unsafe
- Away from big roads, near schools

Land Use

- Zoning that precludes mixed income housing
- Nimbyism re: affordable housing
- Affordable units are being replaced by high-end housing
- Lack of available land to build affordable units
- Developers face regulations/fees that are barriers to inexpensive housing
- No policy promoting development of housing for 0-30% income level
- Issues Related to Affordable Housing

Tenant/Landlord

- Cycle of lack of family wage jobs/lack of affordable units/can't save for down payment
- Need Landlord/Tenant training
- Many individuals lack living skills and need more case management
- Lack of support services/counseling/mediation
- Lack of tenant advocacy groups/ombudsman service
- Perception that minority groups get preferential housing
- Insufficient laws protecting tenants
- Tenants fear retribution if they complain about conditions of housing

Property

- Not enough quiet areas

- Crowded parking
- Garages
- Property not maintained
- Need yard/garden space
- No place for children to play
- Need safety features such as screens on doors and windows
- Need air-conditioned affordable housing

Transit

- Bus takes too long to reach destination
- Need 24-hour bus service
- Housing density related to transit availability
- Need better connections
- Need express service all day, not just at peak times
- Service not keeping up with population growth

General

- Moving to “have/have not” society
- Developers not listening to needs of community
- Population increasing and creating high demand for affordable housing
- Lack of awareness /acknowledgment
- More efficient use of existing housing
- Lack of subsidy
- Negative perception of low income renters

Solutions

Barrier/Issue: Lack of Affordable Housing (creation/maintenance)

- Clearinghouse for information on affordable rentals and comparative prices
- Developer incentives to create/rehab affordable housing/maintain
- Waive fees for affordable developments
- Nontraditional/collective housing
- More self help programs/sweat equity
- Build political support and local/state/federal levels
- Community land trust
- Shared housing
- Mixed income housing

Barrier/Issue: Special Needs and Transitional Housing

- Link housing and interpretive service/education

- Locate affordable housing on transit routes
- Safe and livable communities with parks
- Transitional housing to give families time to save for move-in costs
- Link accessible housing with those who need it
- Halfway houses with supportive group living environment – YW Housing is a model

Barrier/Issue: Jobs and Income

- Educational opportunities for people who lack job skills
- Hire people over age 50
- Better paying jobs
- Quality job opportunities for people with disabilities
- Base affordability standards on net income after medical and other expenses
- Provide additional benefits to people on social security
- Provide information to seniors regarding tax exempt programs

Barrier/Issue: Landlord/Tenant Relationship

- County/City guarantee move in fees for low to moderate income citizens
- Require landlords to refund credit check fees if application rejected
- Standardize fees and cap them also standardize enforcement of violations
- Training for new and small “mom and pop” landlords
- Inform landlords about alternatives to income requirements and up front fees
- Tax credit for landlords with affordable housing for low income people
- Promote Section 8 as a positive opportunity
- Link tenant/landlords/agencies/VPS, neighborhood assoc. in a forum
- Mediation
- Ombudsman giving generic information regarding landlord/tenant laws
- Information to tenants linking them with service agencies
- Educate landlords on voucher system

Clark County/Vancouver Consolidated H & C D Plan Update

Public Meeting

August 26, 1999

COMMENT SHEET

BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

What are the primary reasons many low and moderate income people in Clark County are unable to find and maintain housing that meets their needs?

Please check the responses that apply and add your own, using the back of the sheet if needed.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient household income | <input type="checkbox"/> High rents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rental criteria too restrictive | <input type="checkbox"/> Application fees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fair housing violations | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of accessible housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of intervention services to prevent some evictions | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of landlord/tenant education on the rights and responsibilities of each | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of bus access from affordable housing to jobs and shopping | |

SOLUTIONS

What actions can Clark County take to reduce these barriers, using the federal funds allocated through the Consolidated H & CD Plan?

Please check the responses that apply and add your own, using the back of the sheet if needed.

- ☐ Fund the construction/rehabilitation of affordable and accessible housing units
- ☐ Fund housing services to prevent some evictions
- ☐ Fund landlord/tenant education on the rights and responsibilities of each

What can other public agencies do to reduce these barriers?

Please check the responses that apply and add your own, using the back of the sheet if needed.

- ☐ Add bus lines that provide access from affordable housing to jobs and shopping

There was a fairly even split between those who preferred to own their home, and those that preferred to rent (43% and 46%, respectively), and 21 people indicated they would welcome either. Either way, most people preferred to live in a single family home (54%) with at least two bedrooms. Approximately 35% of the respondents indicated that they need housing related services or facilities--about 5% to 10% per category.

Financial Status

Most people paid between \$225 and \$525 per month for rent and utilities, and about 85% paid less than \$725 per month. Nearly 70% of the total number of respondents earned less than \$11,000 per year. Only four of the homeowners had a total yearly income of \$27,000 or more. According to the Clark County Home Program Income Limits, 465 of the respondents (96%) earned less than 50% of the Portland-Vancouver PMSA median income of \$52,400. Almost 81% of these very low income families earned less than 30% of the median.